

Loan Words from Greek Shared by Georgian and Armenian

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There is no question, of course, that the Armenians and the Georgians have shared words for millennia. They share not only each other's vocabulary, but words coming from tertiary sources, from the other language groups of the Caucasus: Daghestani, Circassian, and from languages of the south, especially Middle Persian and then, later, during the early Christian period, from Syriac but especially from Greek. Later there was an Arab intrusion, and then Turkish. Thus the Armenian and Georgian languages, spoken at a crossroads of ancient and medieval commerce, are languages enriched by a lexical flow from various directions and multiple cultures.

The loan vocabulary in Armenian has been closely studied, both by Soviet and Western scholars, but especially by the extraordinary Armenian linguist Hrachia Adjarian, who recorded the outside influence on the Armenian lexicon in his multi-volume *Root Dictionary* (1926-1935). The Georgian linkage has been subject to a similar scrutiny, though it lacks the systemization brought by a scholar like Adjarian. Gerhard Deeters (1926, 1927) was the first Westerner methodically to make a major assessment of the vocabulary shared by Armenian and Georgian. He followed, though, in the path blazed by the remarkable Nicholas Marr who, in terrier fashion, gnashed at the fringes and frequently bit into the center of this great structure. This he did in his continuing studies at the turn of the century, the thirteen volumes of *Teksty i Razyskanija*, published in St. Petersburg from 1900 to 1913. Marr also dealt with other influences on Georgian, not-

ing, for instance, the vocabulary shared with Udi, recording the influence of those two languages, one small, one great, on each other.² The work has continued, and as our sophistication about the hitherto poorly recorded languages of the Caucasus increases, so does our knowledge of their influence on Georgian. In the last decade Daghestani relations with Armenian were investigated anew by Vinogradova and Klimov (1979), though there are numerous reasons to be critical of that work which appeared in *Ėtimologija* 1977.³ More recently, R.K. Gorgadze (1982) noted current Armenian words, mostly of the Tiflis-Armenian dialect, that appear in contemporary Georgian; and just this year Charles Dowsett revealed (1987) the extent of the Georgian-Armenian literary *Sprachmischung* in an article on Sayat Nova, one of Armenia's greatest poets, who wrote at the end of the 18th century, principally using Armenian vocabulary and syntax, but so frequently sliding into Georgian (and Azeri) that his work is most difficult to interpret today.

This paper will limit itself to that vocabulary, shared by Armenian and Georgian, that is known in Greek, that appears in the Armenian Bible, and that is known in Georgian, though not necessarily in the Georgian Bible. The paper is limited to Biblical vocabulary not for the purpose of moral relevance, but rather to provide easily described parameters. The source material for the question of isoglosses between Armenian and Georgian is rather large, and the whole could not be dealt with adequately in one paper.

It is not only the Greek words that are shared by Biblical Armenian and Georgian. We also have Arm. *kštapanak* 'bracelet' (Bible 3x) shared as Georg. *k'ušt'abani* ultimately from MP *kuštapanak*. And of course such vocabulary appears outside the Bible, where we can note Arm. *mkrat* 'scissors', which appears in Georgian as *mak'rat'eli*,⁴ but both come from Arab. *miqraḍ*, from the root *qaraḍa* 'to cut'. And near-native Armenian words, not of Indo-European origin but from a most ancient unidentified substratum of Armenian, appear as loans in Georgian: Arm. *zatic* 'festival', appears as Georgian *zat'ik'i* and *zadik'i*. Loans also go the other way: the standard Armenian term for 'fly', *čanč*, is taken from the north: Mingr. *č'anji*, Laz. *čaji*, and surely it is only a statistical chance that the Georgian term has been lost.⁵ Similar is Arm. *abet* 'tinder', a loan from Georg. *abedi* with cognates in Mingr. *obed* and Svan *habedi*.⁶

All in all, Armenian and Georgian received lexical infusions on at least two principal levels, the first being the common level of speech where new vocabulary comes through the utterances of neighbors or from the lips of traders (here we have material from many

sources: Persian, Arabic, Turkish, and the numerous languages of the Caucasus) as well as from literary influence (here we think of Greek vocabulary, taken into Georgian and Armenian when the biblical texts were being translated). In modern times, of course, Russian has made its influence felt, and even in Tbilisi the word for beer is *pivo*. These borrowings are normal for any language, and to be expected especially in languages like Armenian and Georgian which have been spoken by people straddling trade routes, and who themselves maintain a high level of culture, attracting other people to them for that reason.

Languages borrow terms not only to satisfy lexical needs, but to flatter the speaker as well. In English the culturally ambitious like to display a knowledge of the French *bon mot*; American scholars delight in larding a phrase with a term from German *Wissenschaft*, and in Yerevan and Tbilisi, people were and are no different. But words were also taken on for more serious reasons, and surely the Greek word *ἐπιστολή* found its way into Armenian as *epistolē* and went into Georgian as *ebist'ole* not because these languages lacked a word for "letter," but because the Greek word had special meaning, and was so used. But the word for Gk. *καθολικός*, *k'atolik'ozi* in Georgian and *kat'alikos* in Armenian, was used because there was a gap in the lexicon.

According to my count, Armenian and Georgian share exactly forty Greek biblical words. And though Georgian and Armenian overwhelmingly acquire these words from Greek independently, a certain few of these words in Georgian seem to conform not to the Greek shape, as one would expect, but rather to an Armenian shape that is significantly different than the Greek shape. Of these words there are seven, and we will examine them now to determine how they came into Georgian; whether directly from Greek, which is doubtful, from Armenian, which is of course possible, or from a third source, which is not recorded. The seven are as follows.

1. Arm. *akain* 'fort' (AG 339), Gk. *ἄκρα* 'id', Georg. *ak'ara*, *ak'ra* 'promontory'. Georg. *ak'ara* follows the Armenian vocalization, and cannot be from Gk. *ἄκρα*.

2. Arm. *haluē* 'aloë vera' (AG 360), Gk. *ἄλoή*, Georg. *halo*.⁷ The aspiration, not known in Greek, is shared by Armenian and Georgian.

3. Arm. *k'aradr*, *k'aladr* 'plover' (Greppin 1978.113-115) (AG 388), Gk. *χαραδριός*, Georg. *karandri*, *kalandros*. The forms with the medial -l- could not have come from the Greek.

4. Arm. *kupr* 'pitch, asphalt' (AG 308), Gk. *κυπάρισσος*, Georg. *k'up'ri*.⁸ Though Hübschmann said the Armenian form was Syriac,

there is no Syriac word, or indeed any recorded North-West Semitic form with a -p- such as we have in Greek.

5. Arm. *lambar*, *lambar*⁹ 'lamp, torch' (AG 351), Gk. *λαμπάς*, Georg. *lambari*, *lamp'ari*. The final -r of the Georgian and Armenian forms cannot result from a Greek original.

6. Arm. *mananay* 'manna'¹⁰ (AG 310), Gk. *μάννα*, Georg. *manana*. The anaptyctic -a- is not from Greek. Hübschmann derives the Armenian from Semitic.

7. Arm. *mnas* 'a Greek coin, the mna' (AG 365), Gk. *μνᾶ*, Georg. *mnasi*. The Georgian follows the Armenian, rather than the Greek, having a final -s.

With the exception of the words for 'pitch' and 'manna', Hübschmann (AG) considers all the Armenian nouns to be derived from Greek, and Adjarian, in his *Root Dictionary*, says the Georgian is most likely taken from Armenian. This, of course, does not account for the phonetic singularities of these seven words. And certainly, in at least four of these cases, it would be best to argue that Armenian and Georgian both got their words from a Near Eastern source, rather than from Greek.

Arm. *akain* and Georg. *ak'ara* could better have come from a form that would approximate Arab. 'aqâr 'property, real estate, a piece of land'; note also 'aqr 'the center of a living area', and mu'qir 'having much property'.

Arm. *haluē* and Georg. *halo* have numerous Semitic correspondents. Syr. 'alway, 'alwā, Heb. *āhālôt*, Eth. 'alwā, Arab. 'aluwwa.¹¹ Yet all these Semitic forms have the meaning of 'wood aloë' rather than the 'aloë vera', and we must assume that Armenian and Georgian, like Greek itself, used this word for a plant of similar value and use. It is difficult to say where the initial aspiration came from. Armenian is known to generate irregular aspiration (the month name 'hoktember' is a good example), and the Georgian could be derived from this irregularity; but just as likely is the possibility that the initial 'ayn in the Syriac form was interpreted as aspiration.¹²

Arm. *kupr* and Georg. *k'up'ri* surely must be from Semitic, but among the traditional Semitic cognates (Syr. *kufrā*, Arab. *kufr*, Heb. *kôfer*) there is no proper voiceless labial plosive. Yet Adontz points out (1938.466) Akkadian *kupru* 'id', and this would seem to be the source. It is argued, convincingly, that the Akkadians had no effect on Armenia, and the Akkadian language never could have intruded. Rather, Diakonoff (1971.83-6) and Greppin (1982) have argued that those apparent Akkadian words actually entered through Hurrian. But whichever, the Georgian and Armenian terms are not from words of North-West or South Semitic.

Arm. *mananay* and Georg. *manana* could not have derived their extra -a- by any internal process. Yet Semitic does have frequent displays of anaptyxis. We can note, specifically for -a- (Moscatti 1980.60) the passage of proto-Semitic *šbat to šabat in Akkadian. It would seem likely that some dialect of a North-West Semitic language affected the same anaptyxis, and it was this form that influenced the Georgian and Armenian forms.

For these four words, 'pitch, citadel, aloë and manna', it seems economical to suggest a Near Eastern origin, rather than a Greek origin with transference of a inner-generated irregularity in Armenian to Georgian. Indeed, this might not be the case, but it is a supposition that treats the facts with the least complication.

Three nouns cannot be said to show a movement into Georgian and Armenian from the Semitic realm, and remain largely puzzles.

Arm. *mnas*, which parallels Gk. *μνᾱ*, has of course an ultimate Semitic source, the root m-n 'part, number',¹³ and Semitic cognates of Heb. *mané*, Aram. *mānya*, Arab. *manā*, Akk. *manû*. None of these support a final -s. There is, though, the possibility that Arm. *mnas* was built from the Greek genitive *μνᾱς*, for this form is very common, appearing in five of the eight instances where *μνᾱ* appears in the Greek Bible.¹⁴ This form in *μνᾱς* could well have been taken by the Armenian translators of the Bible as the base form, and incorporated as Arm. *mnas* from which Georgian was derived.

Arm. *lambar* 'lamp' cannot be explained by any internal Armenian rule, for there is no parallel to this final -r. We might note another biblical word, *λαμπρός* 'bright, radiant' which might have had an influence, for certainly Gk. *λαμπάς* could not be the source.¹⁵

Arm. *k'aladr*, *k'aradr* 'plover', Georg. *karandri*, *kalandros* share an alternate form with medial -l- that is not known in Gk. *χαραδριός*.¹⁶ Meillet (1911) suggests that the Arm. -l- is the product of dissimilation, but there is actually little support for this. The Armenian dialects, though, harbor examples of a passage between r and l, and here we can cite Mush dialect (Greppin 1986.132), the dialect of Xoy (Greppin 1986.244) and especially the dialect of Meghri where we find also support for the puzzling Georgian -n- as well: Aghayan (1953.94) notes Armenian *t'rik* 'dung', but Meghri *t'alenk*'.

Our conclusions are by no means absolute. Though we can show that certain of these seven Georgian and Armenian words are not necessarily from Greek, and though we can show also that certain Georgian words are, contrary to expressed opinion, not derived from Armenian, we can still not really prove the source of the loan firmly in any one specific case. What we can say is that we have opened up alternative avenues for our treatment of vocabulary shared, from a third source, in Georgian and Armenian.

Appendix: Lexical Parallels

Armenian	Greek	Georgian
1. adamand 'diamond'	ἀδάμας	adamasi
2. akaṛn 'fort'	ἄκρα	ak'ra, ak'ara
3. ak'sor 'exile'	ἐξορία	eksoria
4. barbaros 'barbarous'	βάρβαρος	barbarosi
5. bem 'sanctuary'	βῆμα	bemi, bemoni
6. biwreḷ 'beryl'	βήρυλλος	broli
7. denar 'dinar'	δηνάριον	dinari
8. zmurs 'myrrh'	σμύρνα	muri
9. hirik 'iris'	ἶρις	irisi
10. lambar, lampar 'torch'	λαμπάς	lambar, lampar
11. litr 'liter'	λίτρα	litra
12. kat'olikē 'cathedral'	καθολική	k'atolike
13. kat'olikos 'catholics'	καθολικός	k'atolikozi
14. kanon 'regulation'	κανὼν	k'anoni
15. kak'aw 'crow'	κακκάβη	k'ak'abi; Tuš k'ak'ab
16. konk' 'conch'	κόγχη	k'onk'i
17. kupr 'asphalt'	κυπάρισσος	k'up'ri, Tuš k'up'r
18. haluē 'aloe vera'	ἄλوه	halo
19. hiwpatos 'consul'	ὑπατος	ip'at'osi
20. mananay 'manna'	μάννα	manana
21. maneak 'necklace'	μανίακης	maniak'i
22. margarit 'pearl'	μαργαρίτης	margalit'i
23. metak's 'silk'	μέταξα	Laz met'aksi
24. mnas 'mna'	μνᾶ	mnasi
25. yakint' 'hyacinth'	δάκινθος	iak'inti, iak'undi
26. yopop 'hoopoe'	ἔποψ	opopi
27. nardos 'nard'	νάρδος	nardion (< νάρδιον)
28. ovsanna 'hosanna'	φσαννά	osanna
29. pras 'leek'	πράσον	p'ras(a), Laz prasa
30. řabbi 'rabbi'	ῥαββί	rabbi
31. sałmos 'psalm'	ψαλμός	psalmuni
32. sater 'a coin'	στατήρ	satiri
33. sardion 'cornelian'	σάρδιον	sardioni
34. sikḷ 'shekel'	σίκλος	sik'la
35. stoman 'pot, jug'	στάμνος	st'amni
36. tałand 'a talent'	τάλαντον	t'alant'i
37. tpazion 'topaz'	τοπάζιον	t'op'azi
38. p'ilon 'mantel'	φελόνης	peloni
39. k'ałban 'galbanum'	χαλβάνη	kalbana
40. k'aładr, k'aradr 'plover'	χαραδριός	kalandro, karandri

NOTES

¹ Adjarian did not comment on the Hittite and Hurro-Urartian vocabulary, for its relationship to Armenian was then unknown.

² This study of the influence of Udi was only recently resumed by the Azerbaijani-Udi scholar, Voroshil Gukasjan (1984), who noted new lexical parallels between Udi and Armenian.

³ Vinogradova and Klimov note that some of this vocabulary shared between Armenian and the Caucasus is of loan origin, but they do not identify every instance. Thus Arm. *mkrat* 'scissors' is shown to have influenced forms in Lezghian, Kryz, Budukh, and Khinalug, but it is just as easy to think that these Caucasian dialects derived the term from Arabic, the same source whence Armenian received the word.

⁴ In addition to those forms noted in note 3, Adjarian adds Tush *mak'art'a*, Ming. *margat'eli*.

⁵ Alice Harris informs me that a Georgian parallel does exist, *m-c'er-i*, and is so recorded in Chikobava 1938.112. According to historical Kartvelian phonology, the proto-form would approximate **c'₁er-*, with the shift of **r > Zan J* being regular immediately before an *-i*; and the shift of **c'₁* to *Zan č'* is wholly regular, part of a whole set of correspondences including *s : š, c : č*. The insertion of *-n-* in Mingrelian is not regular, but it occurs elsewhere. This etymology is also supported in Klimov 1964.

⁶ This term is lacking, alas, in the new Svan dictionary by Palmaitis and Gudjedjani 1985.

⁷ Georgian also sports *alowe*, *alo* and *aloeē*. The modern form is *aloe*, corresponding to the Russian.

⁸ Similar forms are Tush *k'up'r*, Udi *kupər* (a form lacking in Gukasyan 1974).

⁹ Armenian also has *lampar* and *łampar*, but these *-p-* forms are generally later, and reflect the confusion in Armenian of voicing following a nasal.

¹⁰ This noun is productive only in the Gharabagh dialect, where we have *anmanana* 'fasting'.

¹¹ The term *aloē* is ultimately from South Dravidian, and is reflected in the modern languages as Tamil *akil* 'aloē wood', Kannada *agil* 'the balsam tree that yields bdellium', and Tulu *agilū* 'fragrant wood'. From there, through trade, the word spread to Indic (Skt. *agaru-*, Pali. *agalu-*) and thence to the Semitic lands.

¹² Greek *ἀλόη* is more likely from a different source, perhaps from a parallel to the Heb. *ʾāhālôt*, with regular loss of intervocalic *-h-*.

¹³ All of these, however, are from Sumerian *mana*.

14 The remaining forms are $\mu\tilde{\nu}\tilde{\alpha}$ (2x) and $\mu\tilde{\nu}\tilde{\alpha}\nu$ (1x). The genitive is particularly attractive because it is used to form the genitive of price, a structure closely associated with coin words.

15 The Nor *Bargirk*' suggests influence from Gk. $\lambda\alpha\mu\pi\tau\eta\rho$ 'lamp'.

16 D'Arcy Thompson, in his splendid book on Greek bird names (1936.314) notes that there might be some influence from a Semitic form like Heb. *ḥasīdah* 'a stork? but anyway a bird that is kind and good', from the root ḥ-s-d 'be kind, good,' but this is hard to support.

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